

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 NEW DE 12676 01 OF 02 271441Z

44

ACTION IO-13

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 IOE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04

H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01 AF-08 ARA-06 EA-07 EUR-12 AID-05

EB-07 TRSE-00 /116 W

----- 016205

P R 271330Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8009

INFO USUN NY 2049

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 NEW DELHI 12676

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PORG

SUBJECT: MULTILATERAL AFFAIRS: REFLECTIONS ON THE NON-ALIGNED
SUMMIT

1. SINCE US "DELEGATE" HINES WILL NOT BE RETURNING TO WASHINGTON FOR DEBRIEFING, THE EMBASSY BELIEVES HIS REFLECTIONS ON THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE NON-ALIGNED SUMMIT MEETING WARRANT THIS TELEGRAPHIC REPORT.

2. WHY A SUMMIT?: AN APPRECIATION OF THE COLOMBO SUMMIT CONFERENCE MUST START FROM THE FACT THAT IT HAD NO CONCRETE PURPOSE. FORTY-ODD HEADS OF STATE OR GOVERNMENT AND SIXTY-ODD OTHER DELEGATIONS GATHERED TO DEAL WITH NO PROBLEM, RESOLVE NO ISSUE, EMBARK ON NO NEW COURSE OF ACTION. THE OCCASION FOR THEIR MEETING WAS RATHER IN THE WAY OF A CELEBRATION: AS A NATION CELEBRATES ITS INDEPENDENCE ONCE A YEAR, THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT MEETS TO CELEBRATE ITSELF EVERY THREE YEARS. IT IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE SPEECHES AND ISSUE DECLARATIONS RECALLING PAST VICTORIES AND RECOMMITTING ONESELF TO GROUP IDEALS. LIKE A FOURTH OF JULY PICNIC, SOME CONTESTS OF STRENGTH TAKE PLACE ON THE SIDE.

3. THE PURPOSE OF THE SUMMIT WAS THEN, FIRST, THE REAFFIRMATION
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 NEW DE 12676 01 OF 02 271441Z

OF NON-ALIGNMENT. DESPITE THE PRESENCE OF SOME MEMBERS WHOSE

CREDENTIAL ARE SUSPECT, THE GROUP STILL DEFINES ITSELF ESSENTIALLY BY A COMMON INTERNATIONAL STANCE OF SEPARATION FROM THE "BIG POWERS." IN CONTRAST TO THOSE "BIG POWERS," THE NON-ALIGNED ARE - - AND SEE THEMSELVES AS - - THE SMALL, THE POWERLESS, AND THE POOR. ANXIOUS TO BE FREE FROM THE RESTRICTIONS IMPOSED BY THE REAL INEQUALITY OF THEIR BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH THE US AND THE USSR, THEY CAME TOGETHER FOR A SECOND PURPOSE: TO IMPRESS THE SUPER-POWERS WITH THE IMPORTANCE OF THEIR NUMBERS AND THE VIGOR OF THEIR POLICY GOALS.

4. THREE MAJOR CONCERNS: THREE BROAD ISSUES PREOCCUPIED THE CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS: DECOLONIZATION, DEMILITARIZATION, AND THE CONTAINMENT OF ISRAEL.

(A) DECOLONIZATION: AFRICAN STATES MAKE UP ABOUT HALF THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE MOVEMENT AND THEIR ATTENTION WAS RIVETED ON SOUTHERN AFRICA. THE REST OF THE MEMBERSHIP GAVE THEIR CAUSE SYMPATHETIC AND POSITIVE SUPPORT. ALL OTHER DECOLONIZATION ISSUES WERE OF PERIPHERAL IMPORTANCE, TO A LIMITED EXTENT GAINING LIFE FROM THE REAL PASSIONS AROUSED BY THE STRUGGLE IN SOUTHERN AFRICA.

(B) ISRAEL/PALESTINE: ABOUT ONE FOURTH OF NAM MEMBERS ARE ARAB STATES (SOME STATES COUNTING AS BOTH ARAB AND AFRICAN). WITH THE EXCEPTION OF ALGERIA'S CAMPAIGN ON WESTERN SAHARA, THE SOLE REAL CONCERN OF THE ARAB GROUP WAS THE CONTAINMENT OF ISRAEL AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A PALESTINIAN STATE. AS THE AFRICANS WITH THEIR ISSUE, THE ARABS HAD THE SYMPATHETIC SUPPORT OF THE OTHER CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS.

(C) DEMILITARIZATION: SMALL, POWERLESS, AND POOR, THE NON-ALIGNED ARE STILL CONCERNED THAT MILITARY CONFRONTATION BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND THE SOVIET UNION WILL RESTRICT OR DESTROY THEIR INDEPENDENCE. THEY SEEK TO REDUCE THIS THREAT THROUGH APPEALS FOR DISARMAMENT, ZONES OF PEACE, AND THE WITHDRAWAL OF MILITARY FORCES BEHIND NATIONAL BOUNDARIES.

5. THE CONFERENCE AGENDA, AND THE SCOPE OF THE COLOMBO DECLARATION AND RESOLUTIONS, CAN BE INTERPRETED AS A COMBINATION OF THESE CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 NEW DE 12676 01 OF 02 271441Z

THREE BROAD CONCERNS ON THE ONE HAND AND A PROLIFERATION OF MEMBERS' SPECIAL INTERESTS ON THE OTHER. WHENEVER A SPECIAL INTEREST COULD CAST ITSELF IN THE GUISE OF A BROAD CONCERN (E.G., SAHARA), IT GAINED VIGOR. WHEN IT FAILED TO TOUCH THESE NERVES (E.G. THE BANGLADESH RIVER WATER ISSUE), IT LANGUISHED. IN EITHER EVENT, THESE SPECIAL INTERESTS WERE OF NO DIRECT CONCERN TO THE BROAD MEMBERSHIP OF THE CONFERENCE. THAT INCLUDES THE KOREA QUESTION, PUERTO RICO AND THE CANAL ZONE.

6. TWO ANTAGONISTS, ONE MAJOR AND ONE MINOR: NON-ALIGNMENT IS A MODE OF INTERNATIONAL BEHAVIOR DEFINED IN TERMS OF INDEPENDENCE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF BOTH SUPER POWERS. BUT ANALYSIS OF THE MOVEMENT'S THREE MAJOR CONCERNS REVEALS WHY THE UNITED STATES IS IN FACT ITS PRINCIPAL ANTAGONIST. THE US (SOMETIMES IN THE COMPANY OF WESTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES) IS SEEN AS THE DEFENDER OF WHITE GOVERNMENTS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA, AS ISRAEL'S VITAL ALLY, AND AS THE SUPERPOWER WITH FOREIGN BASES. WITH THOSE THREE STRIKES AGAINST THE US, IT BECOMES AN IMPOSSIBILITY, IN TERMS OF GROUP DYNAMICS, FOR A CONFERENCE PARTICIPANT TO ESPOUSE AN EXPLICIT PRO-US POSITION ON ANY ISSUE.

7. ECONOMIC CONCERNS ARE NOT A CRITICAL MOTIVATING FORCE BEHIND THE MOVEMENT. HAVING FAILED TO ESTABLISH ANY ECONOMIC STRUCTURES BASED ON THE POLITICS OF NON-ALIGNMENT (E.G., THE NON-ALIGNED SOLIDARITY FUND), THE ECONOMIC INTERESTS OF THE NON-ALIGNED ARE SUBSUMED IN THE ACTIVITIES OF THE GROUP OF 77. BUT ECONOMIC ISSUES ARE TOO IMPORTANT TO THE MEMBERS TO BE OVERTAKEN FROM A

SUMMIT AGENDA--INDEED FOR MOST ASIAN STATES THEY ARE MORE IMPORTANT THAN DECOLONIZATION AND ISRAEL. THE CONFERENCE THUS HAD AN ECONOMIC "HALF" WHICH ECHOED MANILA, NAIROBI AND PARIS AND IN GOING SO, AGAIN FOUND IN THE UNITED STATES ITS PRINCIPAL ANTAGONIST.

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 01 NEW DE 12676 02 OF 02 271524Z

44

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SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01 AF-08 ARA-06 EA-07 EUR-12 AID-05

EB-07 TRSE-00 /116 W

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P R 271330Z AUG 76

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CONFIDENTIAL SECTION 2 OF 2 NEW DELHI 12676

8. THE HOSTILITY TOWARDS THE UNITED STATES MANIFESTED IN THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT DERIVES THEREFORE FROM THE CONCERNS WHICH ARE INHERENT TO THE MOVEMENT. WITH THE EXCEPTION OF CERTAIN NAM MEMBERS, THIS HOSTILITY DOES NOT LEAD TO A SENSE OF ALLIANCE WITH THE SOVIET UNION. AS THE SMALL AND POOR OF THE NON-ALIGNED GROPE FOR POWER THROUGH SOLIDARITY AND COOPERATION, THEY ARE SENSITIVE TO CONFLICTS WITH SOVIET INTERESTS AND INTENTIONS. SUCH CONFLICTS HAVE ALREADY SURFACED IN AREAS OF DEMILITARIZATION AND ECONOMIC RELATIONS. IT WAS MOST EVIDENT AT THE CONFERENCE IN THE HANDLING OF THE LANGUAGE OF THE INDIAN OCEAN PEACE ZONE RESOLUTION. AND THE NON-ALIGNED NEWS POOL ASSUMES THAT TASS IS NOT AN ACCEPTABLE ALTERNATIVE TO UPI. NONETHELESS, THE PRESENCE OF SOVIET ALLIES AND THE COMPATIBILITY OF THE SOVIET UNIONS' INTERNATIONAL POSTURE WITH MAJOR NON-ALIGNED GOALS MADE EXPLICIT CRITICISM OF THE USSR IN CONFERENCE TEXTS AN IMPOSSIBILITY.

9. THE LOSS OF CONSENSUS: THE TRIPLING OF NAM MEMBERSHIP, COMBINED WITH THE PROCEDURAL RULE OF NO VOTING, RENDERS DECISION-MAKING AT THE NAC VIRTUALLY IMPOSSIBLE. THE FINDING OF A CONSENSUS BECAME LARGELY THE ACQUIESCENCE IN THE DECISIONS OF SMALLER REGIONAL GROUPS OR THE ADOPTION OF THE POSITION OF AN INTERESTED PARTY PROVIDED HE IS A NAM MEMBER AND THE OPPOSING

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 NEW DE 12676 02 OF 02 271524Z

SIDE ON THE ISSUE IS NOT REPRESENTED. WHERE REGIONAL GROUPS WERE SPLIT (BANGLADESH/INDIA, ASEAN/INDO-CHINA, ALGERIA/MOROCCO), THE CONFERENCE TENDED TO RETREAT FROM THE ISSUE, WHICH MIGHT ITSELF FAVOR ONE SIDE OVER THE OTHER.

10. IT WAS IN THIS PROCEDURAL AND ONE MIGHT SAY EMOTIONAL CONTEXT THAT THE STRUGGLE ON SPECIFIC ISSUES BETWEEN THE MODERATE MAJORITY AND THE RADICAL MINORITY WAS PLAYED OUT UNDER THE GUIDING EFFORTS OF THE NAC GIANTS: YUGOSLAVIA, INDIA, SRI LANKA, AND TO A LESSER EXTENT ALGERIA AND PERHAPS EGYPT. THESE FACTORS AFFECTED THE CONFERENCE OUTCOME ON ALL OF THE FOUR ISSUES OF PARTICULAR CONCERN TO THE UNITED STATES.

(A) KOREA: THE NORTH KOREANS HAD THE ADVANTAGE OF AN ISSUE WHICH WAS NOT THE DIRECT CONCERN OF ANY OTHER MEMBER AND WHICH COULD BE WRAPPED IN THE MANTLE OF DEMILITARIZATION, I.E. THE WITHDRAWAL OF FOREIGN MILITARY FORCES. THAT THEY RAN INTO ANY RESISTANCE AT ALL CAN BE ATTRIBUTED TO (1) EFFECTIVE LOBBYING BY THE US AND OTHERS BEFORE THE NAC AND (2) THE ABILITY OF THE "MODERATES" TO DEFEND SOUTH KOREA WITHOUT HAVING TO DEFEND THE UNITED STATES. DESPITE THE BURST OF OPPOSITION FROM THE NAM'S NORMALLY SILENT MAJORITY, THE DETERMINATION OF THE INTERESTED MEMBER STATE CARRIED THE DAY. THE EXTREME LANGUAGE WITH WHICH NORTH KOREA CHOSE TO

EXPRESS ITS POSITION DID NOT REFLECT THE BROAD INCLINATION OF THE NAC MEMBERSHIP.

(B) PUERTO RICO: HERE THE US WAS IN A TACTICALLY WEAKER POSITION THAN IN THE CASE OF KOREA: ANY OPPONENT TO THE CUBAN POSITION HAD EXPLICITLY TO DEFEND THE UNITED STATES. BUT PRE-CONFERENCE LYOBBYING BY THE US HAD BEEN EFFECTIVE AND THERE WAS WIDESPREAD OPPOSITION TO CUBA'S MORE EXTREME FORMULATIONS. CUBA WAS NONETHE- LESS ABLE TO RIDE THE WAVE OF DECOLONIZATION SENTIMENT WITH AN ISSUE OF NO DIRECT CONCERN TO OTHER MEMBERS. THERE APPEARED TO BE LITTLE INCLINATION TO REJECT CUBA'S DEMAND THAT THE UN CERTIFY THE PROPER EXERCISE OF THE PUERTO RICAN PEOPLE'S RIGHT TO SELF-DETERINATION.

(C) PANAMA: HERE AGAIN, THE NAM MEMBER WITH A SPECIAL INTEREST CLEARLY HAD A FREE HAND. THE PANAMANIAN HAD THZJ ADVANTAGE OF LINKING THEIR CAUSE BOTH TO DECOLONIZATION AND TO DEMILITARIZATION. THE CONFERENCE ADOPTED MODERATE LANGUAGE ON THIS ISSUE SOLELY BECAUSE THE PANAMANIAN GOVERNMENT DECIDED THIS CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 NEW DE 12676 02 OF 02 271524Z

WAS IN ITS BEST INTEREST.

(D) ISRAEL: THE REGIONAL GRUP IMMEDIATELY INVOLVED WAS SHARPLY SPLIT OVER THE QUESTION OF EXPULSION. BOTH SIDES WERE THUS FREE TO SEEK SUPPORT OUTSIDE THE GROUP. THE ANTI-EXPULSION FORCES HAD THE ADVANTAGE OF THE WEIGHT OF NUMBERS AND THE PRE- CEDENCE OF "STANDING LANGUAGE" FROM THE LIMA CONFERENCE. IN THE FACE OF A SPLIT WITHIN THE REGIONAL GROUP AND WITHIN THE MEMBERSHIP AS A WHOLE, THE CONFERENCE STUCK TO THE MORE CON- SERVATIVE FORMULATION.

11. CONCLUSION: FROM A BROADER PERSPECTIVE, THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT IS AN ALLIANCE OF AFRICAN AND ASIAN STATES AGAINST THE DOMINATION OF EUROPEAN STATES (INCLUDING THE SOVIET UNION) AND EUROPEAN OFFSPRING STATES (ESPECIALLY THE UNITED STATES BUT ALSO INCLUDING ISRAEL AND SOUTH AFRICA). ITS CULTURAL BIASES ARE EVIDENT IN ITS CONTRADICTORY POSITIONS ON SELF-DETERMINATION FOR THE PEOPLES OF THE FALKLAND ISLANDS, BELIZE, PUERTO RICO, MAYOTTE, SAHARA AND EAST TIMOR. FOR THE SAME REASON IT CAN WELCOME NORTH KOREA AS A MEMBER WHILE TREATING ROMANIA WITH DIFFERENCE. THE MOVEMENT'S CHARACTERISTIC PRESUMPTION IS THAT FREEDOM (AND GOOD- NESS, TRUTH AND BEAUTY) IS SEPARATION FROM THE WEST. ITS ANTAGONISM TOWARDS THE UNITED STATES MAY WELL DIMINISH OVER THE MEDIUM TO LONG TERM WITH PROGRESS TOWARDS THE RESOLUTION OF SOTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN PROBLEMS AND WITH THE EVENTUAL REDUCED INTAKE OF NEW REVOLUTIONARY STATES AS MEMBERS. FOR THE OMENT, HOWEVER, THIS ANTAGONISM IS THE RESULT OF PERCEIVED CONFLICTS OF INTEREST AND IS FED BY SOME ROOTS WHICH REACH BELOW REASON.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: NONALIGNED NATIONS MEETINGS, MEETING REPORTS, SUMMIT MEETINGS, RESOLUTIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 27 AUG 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: KelleyW0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976NEWDE12676
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760327-0783
From: NEW DELHI
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760812/aaaaakdf.tel
Line Count: 276
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION IO
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 6
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: KelleyW0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 21 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <21 APR 2004 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <09 SEP 2004 by KelleyW0>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MULTILATERAL AFFAIRS: REFLECTIONS ON THE NON-ALIGNED SUMMIT
TAGS: PFOR, PORG, CE, US, (HINES, RICHARD)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006